

know it is true. We have felt his abiding presence, and we know that we are capable of the divine. God can come into us and take up our humanity into his divinity, can dwell in us. "He dwelleth with you and shall be in you." What illimitable heights of development are open to a being into which God deigns to descend! As I saw the mighty acts of Paul, as I saw the noble impulses that pressed him forward to the glorious goal, I marvelled. Is not this he whose breath breathed out slaughter to his fellow-men. Yes, it is he. But here is the secret. "I die! I, the slaughterer, die! But Christ liveth, and he liveth in me."

Yes, brother, the God that came down into the ox's manger can come down into your soul and abide there, God in the humblest of flesh, blessed promise of God in the humblest of us all. Will you this day let him come and abide in you, that as you walk your fellows may say, "I see something divine in that soul. He is patient as Christ was patient; he forgives as Christ forgave; he loves as Christ loved. Surely God is with him, and dwelleth in him. Emmanuel!"

Philadelphia, Pa.

#### CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

J. C. MACKEY

When we speak of Christmas our minds revert to the birth of Christ—the advent of Jesus—the incarnation. These are the designations of that great event which we celebrate on the 25th of every December.

I love to think of the world's greatest occurrence, nearly nineteen hundred years ago, as determined from eternity in the mind of God. What I mean is, that God sending his son into the world was not a mere device to meet an unforeseen catastrophe; it was a great moral fact to which our Heavenly Father looked from eternity; a fact which constituted a central point in the dispensations of his providence and the manifestations of his grace. We should view the coming of Christ, not as an accident nor contingency, but as a blessed arrangement, planned in the eternal counsels of God.

Then, as if to leave no room for doubt, we may find clearly stated in the Old Testament prophecies that Christ should come, the manner of his coming, and its time and place. Jacob, Isaiah, Micah, Zechariah, and Malachi, all describe the leading circumstances connected with the Savior's birth, and every minute particular has been accomplished in the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth.

The grand, but daring thought that should fill our minds during the Christmas season is, that the Christ of God has actually come in the man, Jesus. Here we face a great mystery it is true; but it is not, as some have said, an absurdity. It is beyond reason, but not contrary to reason. For the time we omit the express teaching of the Word, which is both distinct and emphatic, and offer this suggestion. The great Creator supports and sustains, animates and influences, the nature of the being he once made in his

own image, may we not suppose that this connection may become nearer, and more intimate, until it rises into the closest possible union?

Still we hesitate about accepting the truth along this line because we cannot understand it. Let me remind you that we are not required to believe, with a perfect understanding, how the stupendous fact is accomplished. We are simply to believe that the great fact has occurred. The nature of it is a vast mystery; the fact itself, however, is a plain and palpable thing, and may become clear to the smallest mind.

So these are the thoughts I suggest for our Christmas meditation; that the coming of the Christ, and all that is meant by his atonement was planned by the great God in eternity, predicted by the prophets in the Old Testament economy, and accomplished in the fullness of time by Jesus of Nazareth.

#### CHRISTMAS JOYS

R. R. TEETER

No day in the year carries with it in that more joy and good will than the anniversary of our Savior's birth. Yet how much of the joy is due entirely to that which is the result of the Savior's birth.

There is an eager, almost greedy, anticipation of Christmas festivities, exchange of Christmas greetings, and the giving and receiving of Christmas gifts.

But in all there is too little of the spirit of the One who was found, on the first Christmas day, lying in a manger.

In support of this thought we need but call to mind how much of our Christmas joy is dependent on earthly circumstances and material possessions.

With the thought of Christmas comes the thought of Christmas purchases, and show windows and display counters are eagerly scanned by both children and adults. And the joy of Christmas day is made or marred by the ability or the inability to possess some much coveted article.

But true Christmas joy is independent of earthly possessions and circumstances. It does not depend on our having received a certain number of valuable gifts from our many friends, or upon our being enabled to return the compliment. It does not depend upon Christmas turkey and cranberry sauce. But it does depend on a mind at peace with God, a heart filled with good will to men and a purpose to give glory to God in the highest. This can be made possible in the humblest cot as well as in the grandest palace.

When the Christ child lay in the manger, common things were given a new significance, and the vast multitudes of the earth were made to feel that there is a nobility in common things put to right uses, that cannot be obtained by the selfish use of the rare and highly prized things of the world.

In giving Himself for the redemption of the world, Jesus was the illustration of His own precept: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

This is the greatest Christmas joy, outside of the joy of salvation, the joy of giving to others. How much of this joy we miss! How little of it we receive!

Our Sunday school children have been trained for years to expect gifts or a "treat" on Christmas day, instead of the joy that comes from self-denial and ministering to the wants of the needy.

Is it not possible to bring about a reform of some kind along this line? Such reform is needed not only among Sunday-school children, but among all people before Christmas joys can be complete, and before the coming triumph of the thought in the following words from Longfellow:

I heard the bells on Christmas day,  
Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat,  
Of "Peace on earth, good will to men"

I tho't how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom,  
Now roll along the unbroken song,  
Of "Peace on earth, good will to men."

Till ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day,  
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,  
Of "Peace on earth, good will to men."

But in despair I bowed my head,  
"There is no peace on earth," I said;  
For hate is strong and mocks the song,  
Of "Peace on earth, good will to men."

Then peal the bells, more loud and deep,  
"God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!"  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
With "Peace on earth, good will to men."

Milledgeville, Ill.

#### CHRISTMAS

J. L. GILLIN

Christmas is one of the most joyous periods of the year. It brings joy to the children, because then they receive gifts for which they have looked all the year. It brings joy to parents and relatives because of the happiness a small gift of their's brings to the faces of the children. The one is the joy of getting; the other that more blessed joy of giving.

How our hearts soften as we look back thru the mist of years to the Christmas joys of our own childhood! And that joy was not allayed by the facts of circumstances. It was all the same whether the child lived in a mansion or a log house. In our memory the joy of Christmastide was just as full, tho we lived in a log house, as that of the neighbor boy whose home was grander.

And even now I can see the joy that sat on the faces of father and mother as they saw our joy at gifts which their love had provided.

But it seems to me my joy would have been fuller if with the joy of receiving I had been taught to mingle the joy of giving. Too much of the Christmastide is used to teach children to expect to receive rather than to give. Children should be taught to lighten the sorrows of others at this glad season, and to learn that deepest joy which comes from making another person happy in by sacrifice for them. Jesus spake often